

UNITY

Freedom, Fellowship and Character in Religion.

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UNITY.

Senior Editor: JENKIN LLOYD JONES.

Editorial Contributors:

RICHARD BARTRAM, EMMA E. MAREAN,
J. VILA BLAKE, R. HEBER NEWTON,
CHARLES F. DOLE, WILLIAM M. SALTER,
JOHN R. EFFINGER, MINOT J. SAVAGE,
EMIL G. HIRSCH, MARION D. SHUTTER,
FREDERICK L. HOSMER, HENRY M. SIMMONS,
WILLIAM C. GANNETT, JAMES G. TOWNSEND,
ELLEN T. LEONARD, KATE GANNETT WELLS,
JOHN C. LEARNED, CELIA P. WOOLLEY.

UNITY PUBLISHING COMMITTEE: Messrs. Blake, Gannett, Hosmer, Jones, Learned and Simmons.

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What UNITY is Trying to Do.

UNITY is a weekly paper devoted to the dissemination of the principles of Natural and Universal Religion, based on reason and the instincts of trust and aspiration in the human heart; in harmony with the latest discoveries of science, and taking the whole of nature and history for its domain. It aims to develop both the rational and reverent sides of man's being, to promote the spirit of truth, to enlarge the bounds of human fellowship and sympathy in religion, and to enlighten the conscience. It believes the time has come for the establishment of a new type of religion, of universal aim and spirit as distinct from any special forms of faith, of either sect or race,—a religion that welcomes every true, aspiring soul to its fellowship, of whatever age, creed or country.

As the exponent of this type of thought, UNITY needs the active sympathy and support of all its friends, many of whom are yet unknown. We are sure that a large and earnest constituency is somewhere awaiting us. Will you not help us find it, and share with us in the privileges and responsibilities of this enterprise, at once so difficult and so inspiring?

There are many ways in which you can help. We suggest two new ways: We shall have ready for distribution about February 20th a supply of subscription cards prepared especially for those who take no religious paper and would be helped by UNITY. Can you not distribute a number of them for us where they would bring subscribers?

The other way is this: For one dollar we will send UNITY ten weeks to ten new names. Can you not send the paper in this way to ten, twenty or thirty of your friends, and thus give them a chance to see that they can not do without it?

UNITY is now closing its twelfth year of work. For the first eleven years it was sustained by the volunteer work of its editors, and an annual deficit on printers' bills was faced by its publishers. Last year, by a concerted effort of its friends, the subscription list was doubled, the size of the paper increased, the price reduced to one dollar, and the cost of printing provided for. This year by another concerted effort we can supplement the volunteer editorial work by paying an assistant editor, who will both relieve the over-worked senior editor and bring the paper up to a higher standard of accuracy, freshness and promptness.

Please write the publishers early what you can do to help.

Editorial.

THE Browning memorial meeting will be held at Recital Hall, Feb. 27, 8 P. M. The meeting is free to the public.

WE CALL the attention of our city readers to the announcement on our last page this week of a course of five lectures to be given in the Third church, for the benefit of the Western Conference. So excellent a course should win a large hearing on its own merits.

GEN. STEWART L. WOODFORD is reported as saying that an uneducated man should not be allowed the privilege of the franchise, and urging the Republican party to put this principle into its platform, on the ground that though an election or two might be lost, "political parties should not be created to win elections but to secure ideas;" a most praise-worthy sentiment which it would be encouraging to hear other politicians advocate.

THE Chicago Unitarian Club met at the residence of J. M. Wanzer, the evening of the 5th. Rev. Virgil H. Brown, of the Independent church of Princeton, was the essayist of the evening, and read an able paper on "The Man-God," which the society voted to publish in UNITY. On account of the long distances which members of the club must travel when the club meets at private residences, a committee was appointed to try and secure a place of meeting in the central part of the city.

THE ordination services of Leon A. Harvey, at Unity Church, Cincinnati, took place the evening of the fifth. The printed programme is very attractive. The ordination hymn was written by F. L. Hosmer, who also offered the ordaining prayer, and the installation hymn by Alice Williams Brotherton. Rev. J. L. Jones preached the sermon, and Mr. Thayer gave the right hand of fellowship and the charge to the people, that to the minister being given by Rev. G. D. Black. UNITY offers its hearty congratulations to the new society and its minister, and welcomes them to that great field of work,—where workers are needed—the emancipation of the human mind from the last fetter of religious fear and dogmatism.

THE SIXTH lecture in the course on "The Testimony of Science to Evolution," by Prof. E. L. Morse, of Salem, Mass., under the auspices of the Chicago Institute, was the most brilliant one of the season. The subject was "Variation and Inheritance as Factors of Natural Selection." The lecturer began by congratulating the Institute on the admirable enterprise displayed in such a cause, saying that he knew of nothing of a similar nature, that had been undertaken in any other city, east or west. There have been courses of lectures on evolution, but none that included so many men of eminence in their special departments. Prof. Morse is an ardent supporter of the doctrine of evolution, and brings to its elucidation a mind richly stored with fact, fancy and wit. He is one of the most entertaining speakers on the American platform, his wonderful skill in blackboard illustrations, using both hands with equal facility, contributing not a little to the profit and interest of his lectures. We listened to him with unabated attention and delight for two hours, and came away wishing that it might be our good fortune to hear a course of several lectures from him on the general topic

of evolution, with which he is so familiar, and in the principles of which there is general need of wider knowledge.

WE learn from the Boston *Transcript* that John Rogers, whose plaster groups are so well known, has just completed one of his first attempts in colossal work, a group representing the preaching of John Eliot to the Indians. The preacher is standing on a rock, with book in hand and uplifted finger, while the figures of two Indians, man and woman, sit at his feet. The *Transcript* pronounces the work "a piece of heroic and picturesque composition," one which it hopes to see cast in bronze and placed among the permanent art treasures of New England, where it would certainly seem to belong.

WE willingly yield space for Mr. Westall's letter, found in our correspondence column, and are content to let his side of the point at issue rest on its own merits as there presented. Accompanying this letter is a note to the senior editor of UNITY, in which the writer says: "I intend in the future to co-operate with the Western Conference as heartily as with all our Unitarian bodies, and if you think best you can so inform your readers." As these words seem to bespeak a degree of renewed confidence in the principles for which the Western Conference and UNITY stand, we gladly avail ourselves of the writer's permission to give them increased currency in our columns; but we could wish Mr. Westall had, in connection with his criticism of the conference and its methods, criticisms which he has an entire right to make, given expression to this sentiment in his printed letter and above his own signature. The Western Conference numbers many friends who are willing to whisper a confidential word of sympathy in the ear, though Mr. Westall's is something more, but what it needs now far more is the plain and open expression of this sympathy from known friends it has a right to look to for support at this juncture, and whose failing word of help and encouragement is sadly missed.

AN able writer in the Kansas City *Journal* has spoken a wise and timely word on the "God in the Constitution" controversy. It is a subject that takes us at once back to "the times and spirit of the Middle Ages." Those who are laboring so earnestly on the affirmative side of this question, confound the right of man's belief on religious subjects with the obligation to make some official or authoritative statement of that belief; but it is a "mistaken issue." It is not a question of whether there be a God or not, but is an attempt to introduce "into our organic law a problem that does not apply to the practical ethics of life." The writer then goes on to speak of the natural rights of every member of society, and the impertinent interference with such rights arising from every attempt to substitute outside authority for individual judgment in matters of religious belief. "The ecclesiastical world has so long forced man into a false position that it has become almost hereditary with us to concede them some sort of authority in such matters." The writer very justly lays down the principle that "there is no authority older or superior than the people themselves, and the people derive authority only from the absolute authority of the individual himself." The Declaration of Independence contains the nearest formula to the teach-

ings of Jesus, to be found in the world's history. The pertinent question is the n raised: "Whose God are we to put into the Constitution?" the God of Moses or Mahomet. The Christian God is so connected with the first that it is impossible to say where the other begins. The writer closes by saying there was never a "grosser blasphemy" than that which lies in the assumption always revealed in discussions of this topic, that it is the intelligence of the nineteenth century that has made irreligious. He denies that this is an infidel or atheistic age, but the true religionists of this and all time "are those who see in man the highest manifestation of God, and in his freedom and development the highest worship of the Creator." All this seems to us to apply not only to the special subject under debate, but to every attempt on the part of ecclesiastical bodies to shape the opinions of their adherents, "to introduce into our organic law a problem that does not apply to the practical ethics of life."

"TWENTY-FIVE YEARS TOGETHER" is the happy title of the anniversary pamphlet which reaches us from the Second Unitarian Church of Brooklyn, recording the exercises which celebrated the close of the first quarter century's work of Rev. John W. Chadwick with his beloved society. Mr. Chadwick's name is a household word, replete with tender and inspiring associations throughout the Unitarian fellowship, and for that matter far beyond. A pleasant feature of this anniversary reunion was the helpful word and presence of many in the congregation and on the platform who took part in the young pastor's ordination services twenty-five years before. The anniversary fell on the exact date of the ordination. Mr. Savage sent a tribute of verse. The hymns sung were selected for some special association either with the minister or the church's history. There was an address by Rev. Samuel Longfellow, the former pastor of the society, and Robert Collyer preached the same sermon he had preached at Mr. Chadwick's ordination services, from the text, "And Enoch walked with God." The letters that fill the last pages of the pamphlet are full of interest, but our limited space forbids quotation. Will Mr. Chadwick accept UNITY's word of heartiest congratulation and God-speed.

OBLIGATIONS IMPOSED IN CHANGING RELIGIOUS BELIEFS.

The degree of moral obligation that goes along with a recognized change of religious belief, has always been a difficult point to settle. On the one side are the literalists, who admit but one interpretation, and that the harshest, of the old creeds and ceremonies, declaring every man of broader views who continues the use of such forms a hypocrite, and on the other are the apologists, who are forever seeking a plausible excuse for the continued use of outworn religious phrases and passwords. Between these two stands another class of modified opinions and practice, larger perhaps than either of the others, as the party of compromise is apt to be. John Morley has written a lengthy essay filling an entire volume, on this subject of Compromise, in which he defines his aim as a search for "one or two of the most general principles which ought to regulate the practice of compliance." That the healthy progress of ideas included this "practice of

compliance" everyone will admit; but the degree of such compliance will always be variable and relative. Men will decide their own duty, in respect to their waning or growing beliefs and pronounce judgment on their neighbors, from purely individual points of view, inherent in their varying degrees of culture and experience. In an age of rapid religious change like the present, the advanced knowledge of men should be accompanied by widened sympathy for all forms of honest thought. In fact true mental progress cannot exist without this quickened moral sympathy and understanding. The true liberal is not more distinguished by mental breadth than a certain hospitality of the heart, which welcomes every form of aspiring faith *on its own merits*, without reference to exact standards. This is not to say the pronounced liberal may not examine and pronounce judgment on what may seem to him the less direct and more dilatory processes which mark his neighbors religious advancement. Such examination of other minds and their method of action is inevitable and a necessary part of his own instruction; but the man of clearly-defined opinions, whether liberal or conservative, must always guard against the tendency to dogmatize. Readers of *UNITY* will remember a letter published in our columns two weeks ago entitled "A Converted Minister," and written by a layman who set before us the not uncommon case of "one Rev. —" who had outgrown the orthodox belief in which he was reared, but had not severed his connection with his society, preaching from week to week "broad sound Unitarianism, to the delight of his entire congregation, except three." The writer of this letter bespeaks for his pastor the sympathy and fellowship of Unitarians. In reply to this printed correspondence comes a letter from a Congregational minister entitled "A Word of Counsel," which we print in another column. Its resolute tone commands our admiration as does its uncompromising frankness. We should be untrue to the traditions of a life-time if, barring a needlessly harsh expression now and then, this direct and manly letter did not rouse a warm response. The writer's position is not only self-respectful and dignified, but essentially right and unimpeachable. The world will always hold in highest honor men of this determined and heroic stamp. And yet we feel that the case of the man whom H. T. loves and defends, is not wholly settled by this vigorous arraignment of our later correspondent. The Rev. — represents a class of minds equally aspiring and anxious to serve the cause of truth, equally conscientious in the search for truth. Often we pronounce a man dishonest, whose methods of thought are only obscure and indirect. It is true that selfish and cowardly motives may affect a man's power to think, as they do his power to act. Our opinions are very apt to run after our inclinations, as Felix Holt expresses it; still, large allowance must be made for the just and necessary degree of influence which a man's past exercises over his present, for the active interference, with absolute standards, of a long line of cherished associations and ideas. Moreover in a day of recognized religious change and growth, which even our Presbyterian friends are admitting and striving to adjust themselves to, there is larger necessity and room for a generous patience, and the exercise of a spirit of help and sympathy which does not stand too rigidly on the exact letter of a situation like that described by H. T. Probably his friend belongs to that large class of ministers whose liberal preaching has not yet displaced them from orthodox pulpits, and who justify their continued occupancy of the same on the ground that they are able to accomplish most good where they are. This kind of reasoning has never seemed to us very sound, but we should not therefore always pronounce it dishonest, or self-seeking in motive. At a period when all religious opinions are, so to speak, in a

of flux, it is unwise, sometimes cruel, to insist on exact statements of belief and exact lines of conduct following from those opinions are still at the formative stage. More closely examined cases like that described by H. T., which exhibit the element of uncertainty so plainly in all outward relations, are seen to be based on an equal uncertainty of conviction within, *i.e.* on a hesitant, groping state of mind that can only feel its way slowly, and hit upon many devices of speech and conduct before a true basis is reached. Therefore, while we would not abate an inch of our correspondent's demand for clearness and honesty of speech on all matters of religious belief, for a straight and undeviating line of thought and conduct, we would set up a supplementary appeal, for a large-hearted charity and patience. There may be a point, in individual cases, where charity and patience should end, and take on the sterner aspect of justice and absolute sincerity. Love of truth must always take precedence of the desire to conciliate and soothe; but the spirit of true liberalism will seek to help all souls searching for the light *over* the stony places, and *through* the dark ones, while it keeps ever in mind the only worthy goal of man's endeavours—truth.

C. P. W.

LOOKING FORWARD.

Rarely has there been an age so blessed with two such contemporaneous singers as Tennyson and Browning. Side by side they lived and sung for sixty years, honoring the English tongue and ennobling those who use it. Both kept their lyres strung long after the allotted three score and ten. Each has recently given us the priceless gift of another volume. Upon one is already written the sad word, "Last!" and possibly the same word may ere long be written upon the other. And this possibility was doubtless in the minds of each poet as he prepared his volume. Both volumes close with a remarkable poem, a looking forward, the foreglance of the aged. The two poems are very beautiful but very different, putting the accent on different parts of the unparsed sentence of the future.

Tennyson is thinking of the sea. His figure is that of a sailor; he is dreaming of a voyage that he is soon to take, and thus sings of it:

Sunset and evening star,
And one clear call for me!
And may there be no moaning of the bar
When I put out to sea;
But such a tide as moving seems asleep
Too full for sound and foam,
When that which drew from out the boundless deep,
Turns again home.
Twilight and evening bell,
And after that the dark,
And may there be no sadness of farewell
When I embark;
For, tho' from out our bourn of Time and Place
The flood may bear me far,
I hope to see my Pilot face to face
When I have cross'd the bar.

Browning thinks of the time when friends will mourn him and loved ones will talk about him, and his fear is that, even these may not have caught the music of his life or discovered the secret of his joy, so he ventures to do what is very rare for him, to speak a word in explanation of himself, suggesting to these friends the key-note by which they are to render the music of his life:

At the midnight in the silence of the sleep-time,
When you set your fancies free,
Will they pass to where—by death, fools think imprisoned—
Low he lies who once so loved you, whom you loved so,
Pity me?
Oh, to love so, be so loved, yet so mistaken!
What had I on earth to do
With the slothful, with the mawkish, the unmanly?
Like the aimless, helpless, hopeless, did I drift
Being who?

One who never turned his back but marched breast forward,
Never doubted clouds would break,

Never dreamed though right were worsted,
Wrong would triumph;
Held we fall to rise, are baffled to fight better,
Sleep to wake.

No, at noonday in the bustle of man's work-time,
Greet the unseen with a cheer!
Bid him forward, breast and back as either should be.
"Strive and thrive," cry "Speed, fight on, fare ever
There as here!"

The writer read and interpreted the above poems not long ago to about two dozen bright boys and girls, whose average age was about fifteen years, the large majority of whom voted that they preferred Tennyson's poem. This is probably the verdict of a large majority of readers, so much more enamored is the world yet with the thought of rest than with the thought of work. The peace of quiet rather than the peace of action is the heaven most people still yearn for. Does this not indicate the source of much of the disappointment, the turmoil and unrest of the world? The calm of the onflowing river is for the human soul, the calm of the mill-pond is for the beast, we trust it is not for the angel. The peace of heaven is only for him who faces strife, rest is only for the toiler. To push a comparison of these poems too far would be to violate all laws of criticism. Both are beautiful and both are true to the human soul; but we cannot wholly escape a comparison of the lives that lie back of these poems. Tennyson has ever been the sweet singer of doubt, the interpreter of that half sad and somewhat nerveless questioning spirit which only occasionally reaches joyous, triumphant notes. Browning, on the other hand, has been the martial poet of the spirit, the confident singer of a larger faith. Tennyson has been shy of human nature, and apparently distrustful of many of his fellow men. Browning has wooed the human soul as the other has solitude. He has taken into his heart all manners and conditions of men. The old age of one has seemed to bring a mild denial of some of his earlier inspirations. He halts on ground he once walked upon confidently, his longing is for rest and light. The other justified the inspiration of his manhood, that said:

Grow old along with me,
The best is yet to be,
The last of life for which the first was made.

And he died with the bugle to his lips sounding the call of "forward." His thought of death is not of rest or of quiescence, but of that *thriving* that comes through *striving*. There as here he would fare ever by fighting ever the battle of righteousness.

We will not raise the question as to which is the higher note. But is not the latter note the more timely, the more needed to-day? The peace of the "church triumphant" is not for many of us, but the peace of the "church militant" is for all who will accept it and pay the price thereof. No sleep is sweeter than that of the soldier's, wrapped in his blanket on a worthy and well-fought field.

Let no one be frightened by what seems a grim alternative. Somehow in the ultimate synthesis, doubtless, the Tennysonian and the Browning song will mingle and unite. Away out in the ocean the eternal motion may find its lasting equilibrium, but for that we must not wait, and of that it is not for us to speak. Enough for us to know that now great peace comes to him who contends for the right and that

The very fiends weave ropes of sand,
Rather than taste pure hell in idleness.

LET THE PEOPLE CHOOSE.

The Unitarian church at Rochester, N. Y., has taken up the custom quite prevalent among the English churches, and a growing one among our American churches, of publishing a monthly bulletin containing sermon and Sunday topics, week day announcements and such other word of welcome or of direction as may help along the minister's work. The announcement for Sunday, February 23, is as follows:

Abou Ben Adhem—and the Western Unitarian Conference. (Collection for the missionary work of the American Unitarian Association and the Western Unitarian Conference.)

The foot notes contain the following further explanation:

The Western Unitarian Conference is at present somewhat under ban by the American Unitarian Association, the Mother-Conference of us all. On the fourth Sunday of the month the so-called "Issue in the West" will be referred to, and a collection (outside of the envelopes) will be taken up for the work of the two Associations. This, and the contribution to the State Conference asked for in September, are our two missionary offerings of the year. Our faith, and the spirit of our faith, carry blessing; let us give according to the blessing they have been to us.

The fourth page contains Leigh Hunt's well-known poem of "Abou Ben Adhem." This is one way of doing it. Is it not nearly time that all Unitarian ministers, east and west, take some frank and earnest steps towards enlightening their constituency concerning the searching agitation that has exercised the Unitarian fellowship for the last four years? And is it too much to expect that all ministers should give their people an opportunity of electing the destiny of their missionary funds in view of the insulation, and so far as it lies within the power of the board of the American Unitarian Association, the ostracism of the Western Unitarian Conference from its work and confidences, because at Cincinnati, in 1886, it refused to rim its Unitarianism with any thought line, and declared that it was ready to "welcome those who were willing to work with it for the advancement of truth, righteousness and love in the world." Those who persist in seeing nothing in this strain but a "quarrel about words," or a "struggle of personalities," cannot much longer expect to command the intellectual respect of intelligent people. And they who have conscientiously tried to keep all tidings of this discussion away from their people, and have avoided all allusion to it in their ministry, must look well to their integrities, lest they find themselves treading upon grounds so often condemned as the ground of priest or Jesuit. If the American Unitarian Association persists in its policy of differentiation there is no reason why the two kinds of Unitarianism should not stand side by side, openly before the world, in a fair contest for the suffrage of the future, and for their respective measure of support from the present. "Choose ye this day which ye shall serve, the Unitarian *movement* or the Unitarian *sect*, the Unitarian *spirit* or the Unitarian *letter*, the Unitarianism that is content to stop with the insistence upon 'God as an Unit,' or the Unitarianism that is still pushing on to the higher and more spiritual synthesis; the necessary correlation of the above, the 'Unity of Humanity,' the community of all religious souls." This is the demand which sooner or later seems to be approaching every Unitarian minister and Unitarian man or woman, east or west. And this necessity is being forced upon them by the present policy of the officers of the American Unitarian Association and the National Conference, not by the wishes of the Western Unitarian Conference or its friends. The Western Conference claims the old familiar place *within* the circle, and asks the privilege of making, with their parent organization, common cause in the battle against bigotry, narrowness, ignorance and all unrighteousness.

Contributed and Selected.

THOUGHT.

Thought, brave as the day,
That conquers the night;
With life like the spring
Creative of Right:
Free as the waves are
Carrying earth's trade,
Clear as the skies are
In glory arrayed;
Thought, pure as a brook,
Like blossoms most sweet,
In print and in speech
Right gladly we greet!

WILLIAM BRUNTON.

THE LAW OF RETRIBUTION IN NATURE AND SPIRIT.

The history of the earth is that of constant creation and destruction. The coast line of the sea is changed by the constant beating of the waves against the rocks, and the boundaries of continents are changed by the same processes, while new continents are in the process of formation. Destruction in one place is the condition of creation in another, and the change is so gradual that we mark it by the lapse of centuries.

Thus the planets change their forms, and with these changes come new conditions of life. Growth and decay, life and death, are everywhere seen. The fine dust of the pulverized rock settles on the bottom of the lake or ocean, to become the rock of future ages. There is a corresponding change in life itself, as seen through human experience, in thought and feeling. There are tides of thought and waves of feeling. Life has its obstructions, like the mountains that hedge in the ocean. Life's tides and waves continually beat against those obstructions and wear them off; and human progress is marked by the destruction of those theories and systems of thought, and those institutions which were regarded as sacred in past ages. New life is born of decay. There is a power human or divine, which determines every social change. That power is invisible in its action. Here it is dissolution, and there recombination. A crisis is always at hand, for individuals and nations. We cannot escape the law of action and reaction in human life any more than we can in mechanics.

The brain is wasted by every thought; the wear and tear of nerves in the race of life is like that of machinery driven by the power of steam. The law of life is the law of judgment. The books are always opened, the balance sheet is ever at hand, and the law of retribution brings debtor and creditor into close relation. The daily reckoning does not close the account. It runs on forever, but not carelessly, and when the results of living are hidden from us, they are still exactly kept, and our dues are all credited.

We are often in doubt, but there is hope for us in the darkest hour.

Conscious of freedom we are yet bound to the deeds which have made our past lives, our errors being the network which entangles our feet, our virtues being pavements of adamant on which we walk, and the way is narrow and difficult. Circumstances shut us in on either side like rivers to be bridged, or mountains to be tunneled, and every deed comes back to us to comfort or to plague. Thus retribution comes by its own momentum, and gravity itself keeps the pendulum swinging.

We are ever under moral law as we are subject to physical law, even when we are unconscious of it, as we are unconscious of gravitation and of the velocity of the earth on its axis or in its orbit.

But man is not a block, held by a power to which he is ever to be passive. He is a representative of the power which moves the world, and he bears in him a record of the past life of the race.

That life is moral; he determines what he will do or is determined by others. He has a moral sense and the book of life is read thereby. While we are subjects of law, we are judges of that law of right and duty. The inevitable is around us, but there is a power of choice of which all are conscious, and this moral agent has a clear sense of justice, and talks of the rewards and punishments of life, of judgment days, of judgment scenes in the life of every person, corresponding to court scenes and times of trial in human affairs. These crises of the moral life of persons and of states, have been vividly portrayed in pictures and parables by the great teachers and seers of the world. These crises are called seasons of divine judgment, and the representation is liable to give the impression that one judgment day is fixed for all mankind, a view utterly false in all respects. There is in the Gospels a picture of the

nations gathered before the Son of Man, who separates one person from another as a shepherd divides the sheep from the goats.

By painting, poetry and sermon, Christians have been made familiar with that scene. It supposes that the man has insight to give the law by which all consciences are tried. It supposes that the law has been proclaimed by which mankind are self-condemned, are self-approved. The scene of an oriental court is made available to represent the conscious judgment which men pass upon themselves when they recognize the law of life which governs moral beings.

The king welcomes some as blessed and they receive the kingdom prepared for them. They have come into this moral estate and received this power by doing certain actions which indicate the dominant life. They have fed the hungry, given drink to the thirsty, clothed the naked, visited the sick and the prisoner and been kind to the stranger. They are conscious of the blessings conferred, but are not able to remember the times and seasons when they did the specific deeds which are mentioned.

Go over the world and find those who have given themselves to a life of philanthropy and can they tell you of the times and seasons, can they remember when they did each individual act? It was enough that they gave though but a slender mite.

And "gave to that which is out of sight," in the spirit of universal charity, —to insure the blessedness. . . .

When we do those deeds which bring the highest rewards in the interest of humanity, we do not put them down in our accounts which we expect to bring up at a judgment day. Such deeds go to judgment while we are making the record, and the judgment is against us. Our lives are books opened or unopened; and every act goes to judgment in the instant it is done. It may be for us or against us. Nay, there is a moment of judgment for every vile thought, and that moment is when it is cherished and made effective in life.

There is judgment passed on every good thought and act, whether we know it or not. I believe that we all shall stand at the judgment bar of God, it is everywhere and in all relations, and we are more or less conscious of the fact.

We cannot escape the consequences of our errors; we reap the fruit of our ignorance; we find life revealing itself in new events every year, unexpected events, which are remote effects of causes long since forgotten, or actions to which we gave no importance.

The blessedness or the woe of life is sure to come whether we can remember the special actions of our lives or not. "I was hungry and you fed me." That you cannot remember. "Inasmuch as you have done it unto the least of my brethren, you have done it unto me." Not the special deed, but the spirit and motive remain.

L. S. HUNTING.

The London Academy prints the following letter from Robert Browning to Lord Tennyson:

29 DE VERE GARDENS, W., Aug., 5, 1889.
"MY DEAR TENNYSON:—To-morrow is your birthday—indeed a memorable one. Let me say I associate myself with the universal pride of our country in your glory, and in its hope that for many and many a year we may have your very self among us—secure that your poetry will be a wonder and delight to all those appointed to come after. And for my own part, let me further say, I have loved you dearly. May God bless you and yours!"

"At no moment from first to last of my acquaintance with your works, or friendship with yourself, have I had any other feeling, expressed or kept silent, than this which an opportunity allows me to utter—that I am and ever shall be, my dear Tennyson, admiringly and affectionately yours,

ROBERT BROWNING."

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"Who knoweth but thou art come to the kingdom for such a time as this." Esther 4: 14.

The scholars tell us that in ancient times there was a sharp struggle over the admission of this book of Esther into the sacred canon. The opposition to it did not grow out of doubts as to its historical value, nor out of any lack in itself of literary power and beauty. It was aroused by its non-religious character. The word "God" does not occur in it, nor does it exalt the temple-service or add to its imposing ritual. The priests had but one standard of holiness; it was pageantry of worship. Prayers and dripping altars were their holy things. They were ready to accord a divine sanctity to anything that could add strength to ecclesiastical form, and vigilant to exclude from the sacred treasures anything, no matter how excellent, which was incapable of a ceremonial significance or use.

But the book was preserved and clothed with canonical authority. God sooner or later overrides the ecclesiastic, as history testifies. What God ordains to power the priest may not hope to forbid. Men may oppose, yet under their very eyes the proscribed thing grows and rises in authority and compels recognition. The book was preserved because nature insists on teaching men that nothing is holier than courage in the trying ordeal of duty. It was preserved because Heaven regards self-sacrifice more divine than prayers and dripping altars. It was preserved because it is the oracle of that infinite goodness that lives in human progress.

It is not history—this book of Esther; doubtful if there is even a vestige of actual fact in it. In all likelihood no such person ever existed as Mordecai and Esther, and no such events transpired as the proscription of the Jews and the counter-proscriptions and slaughter of their enemies. It is a romance founded on a close knowledge of the laws of human nature which are the same one generation with another, valuable as a picture of the manners and morals of an old time civilization, which held certain things, as the doctrine of retaliation, in high esteem which our more genial age regards as brutal and base, chiefly valuable as an exhibition of that moral heroism which God prizes above all things human—prizes so highly that he never lets an example of it die. Mordecai is the voice of outraged humanity; Haman, the prosecuting spirit of power; Esther, devotion achieving redemption by self-sacrifice.

You are familiar with the story. Over the captive Jews dwelling peacefully in the various provinces of the Persian empire, an imminent peril suddenly has gathered. Proud-spirited Mordecai, the man who dared to refuse homage to Haman, is weighed down under a heavy woe. Not on his own account does he wear the sack-cloth; no, he is not the man to cringe under the blow which his own deliberate act has provoked; it is on account of his people, who are imperiled by his dangerous independence. He did not anticipate from Haman so dreadful a retaliation. That he forfeited his own life by his refusal to prostrate himself before the courtiers, he had good reason to expect. But that his act should be the signal for that bloody decree, dooming the entire nation to destruction, was as terrible as it was unexpected.

And now what is to be done? Can the peril be averted? The question is

a dark one. Sack-cloth and ashes can publish his grief but they cannot revoke the decree. The exigency demands action. The conspiracy must in some way be circumvented.

So he thinks over the problem—thinks as only a swiftly-approaching calamity can make a man think.

Suddenly his face brightens. A gleam of hope shoots through his troubled brain. He recalls that bright day which saw his own beloved Esther made the bride of Babylon's monarch. It was a strange event; he remembers how he wondered at the time what great things Providence could be planning, that a Jewish maid should be elected to Persia's throne. Now he begins to see through it. The cloud hanging over his people, the light of that bright day begins to kindle with the silver lining. 'Twas for such a time as this, God chose the maid to be the instrument to baffle and destroy the courtiers.

The old man sends a message to his niece, tells her all his thoughts. Eloquent he rehearses the situation, shows her the dark meaning of the decree, the destruction which threatens her people, reminds her that God has placed her in a position where possibly she can bring about their rescue. Her influence with the king may be the means which God has ordained to undo all this mischief which Haman has designed. She must go to the king.

And go she would with alacrity, but for one thing. The monarch is hedged about with terrors. There is a law of the Medes and the Persians that no person shall enter the royal presence unbidden, under penalty of death, save as the king shall choose to stay the penalty by graciously lowering his sceptre to the intruder. Not even the queen may violate this statute, except at the peril of her life. Esther would go gladly and do her best to circumvent Haman, but the king does not send for her, and to go unbidden—ah! right well does she know that it is to throw herself upon the mercy of that royal caprice, whose latest deed had been the destruction of the noble Vashti.

So the picture lies spread before us. Central in the scene stands the grave, determined Mordecai; beside him the pale, trembling princess; in the background the doomed natives, over them the dark cloud, to the right the implements of destruction, to the left the executioners of the bloody decree hastening to their work; in front, the throne of the fickle, brutal Xerxes; between that throne and that stricken group, a thorny path for the tender feet of a timid girl.

The child looks out into that path and shudders. To the King she must go, and at once, but what strong terror strikes into her heart at the thought of the ordeal. Her fluttering spirit yields all its strength, which is but little, to the effort, and half blind with fear she gasps "I go, and if I perish I perish." It is a wee cry, faint as that of the birdling in the nest in the meadow-hedge, yet how it lives, how far its soft, penetrating note can be heard. We hear it yet, crisp and musical, while all the noises of the tumultuous ages are hushed.

So the poor child sets out on her perilous errand; goes by herself, first of all to pray—yes, for this world with all its merry gaiety has suddenly vanished, it is the impenetrable other world upon whose borders her feet are standing. The dread powers of destiny are playing fiercely about her and the Eternal must sustain her or her heart will fail her. Timid, trusting child, she does not know that already the universe is on her side, putting its omnipotence into her faint cry of helplessness.

She descends to the garden and plucks a rose from the bower, amid whose delightful shade and fragrance she has spent so many happy hours. Will she ever visit that bower again? Those spicy odors which are just now wafted in upon the breezes, will the winds ever bring the like to her again? Shall she ever again tread those familiar paths or watch the butterflies flitting

among the flowers or caress the pet gazelles which so often have fed from her hand?

She leaves her garden and proceeds along the walk which leads to the King's palace. The outer gate is reached. She announces to the guardsman that she must see the monarch. "Art thou summoned?" is his challenge. "I am not," is her reply. A shadow flits across the grim countenance of the warrior and a pang shoots through the heart of the queen. The officer retires and quickly returns, but with no light in his face. He gruffly bids the queen "pass on." She crosses the threshold. Will she ever recross it? She dares not think. She passes through the long corridor. Against either wall stands a column of mute, mailed spear-men. Never before did their brutal looks seem so terrible as now. They gaze upon her as she walks past, and on every face she seems to read the one word—"death." She reaches the second gate. "Whom seekest thou?" is the challenge. "The King." "Art thou summoned?" "No." Another cloud over the official's brow and another pang through the girl's heart. "The King is in the inner court," says the officer as he impatiently throws back the gate.

When every nerve has been strained to its utmost tension in the effort to pass what seems to be the turning point in a crisis, how crushing the discovery that the end is not yet. Such moments are among the desperate ones of experience. For an instant all effort is paralyzed, reason is threatened and the heart sinks in discouragement to the verge of despair.

Such a moment as this, we can imagine, now finds Esther as she stands at that second gate. She had hoped when that gate opened to be in the presence of the monarch. She had calmed her feelings to meet her fate at just this time and place. When, therefore, she learns that the king is still farther on, the announcement overwhelms her. Still to carry the look of surprise, still to march through the long corridor, with its grim ranks of death on either side, still to be buried alive in this mortal fear—how can she? For a moment she is motionless. Her brain reels. She feels her nerves throb with a strange violence. She is ready to faint, but the thought of her errand flashes across her mind and revives her courage.

She crosses the threshold and passes on through the ranks of frowning soldiery. And now the last gate is reached. It opens. She stands face to face with the monarch. Upon the throne he sits motionless, with his sceptre elevated. The queen advances with quiet dignity. The monarch's eye is fixed upon her. The eyes of the courtiers are fixed upon her. The look of the guardsman is fixed upon her. Everything is fixed upon her. A deathly stillness fills the court, broken only by the rustling robes of the advancing queen. The air is thick with fate. Still she moves towards the throne, nearer and yet nearer, her calmness and dignity unruffled, the silence unbroken. All so quiet—so awfully quiet!

But the moments tarry not, they are swift though loaded with destiny. Esther is on the verge of the crisis which she has dared. Hush! Xerxes moves. His cold face begins to melt into a smile. The sceptre is lowered. She touches it, and the struggle is ended. The little heroine has conquered, and the jeweled finger of the timid Jewish maid rules the proud empire of the Orient. The story fits all ages. I judge that it was born of the heroic times of the Maccabees, that grandest period in Jewish history, when for a century the nation sustained the onset of a war of extermination, when the torch of liberty and patriotism glowed at every fireside and every man took his life in his hand ready to die for his country. It was in that Maccabean struggle that the moral power was forged which created Christianity, and which has been working ever since in

the rising character of humanity. The doctrine of redemption by sacrifice, by taking up the cross of heroic self-denial, which has figured so conspicuously in the ethical and religious thought of all modern times, was kindled by that torch of patriotism which through all that fearful Maccabean struggle burned at every Jewish fireside.

As we cherish among the world's holy scriptures this old drama which immortalizes the deathless spirit of that by-gone age, we revere the truth pulsing through it as the highest voice of the divinity of man.

It has a living value. It brings vividly into view one of the potent, eternal laws of human development. We never read the story of a high moral daring, unselfishly chosen, that we do not feel ourselves in touch with the sole source of the real and lasting grandeur of man. We are in touch with the energy which makes the vigorous, healthy growth of humanity. Moral heroism is to society what a cyclone, a thunder-storm is to the atmosphere, a purifier, a regenerator; or what natural selection is in biology, the struggle-breeding force which thwarts the forces of annihilation and secures the higher type of life. Human nature never could have survived till the present, or had it done so, its history would present a picture of dissolution, loathsome and hideous, had moral heroism failed from the earth. The only thing which makes the pages of history tolerable to look at, is the daring of the men and women who have withstood the world for conscience's sake. Louis XIV. enjoyed the distinction of being styled the grand monarch, but the only grand thing of his reign, the only spot of living verdure, was the heroism of the Waldenses whom he tried to destroy and whose sublime faith under their terrible persecutions created throughout Europe a new and sturdier conscience. They have just erected a monument to Bruno, in Rome, on the site where amid the terrors of the *auto-da-fe*, his brave, serene soul stood unflinching witness to the eternal truth. The moral stench of the papacy of that day is loathsome to the nostrils of this cleaner century; if there were nothing worthier to search for than the remains of titled dignitaries who made the earth tremble, we could no more stir up the annals of that corrupt papal court and society than we could dig up rotten carrion; but for Bruno's sake we remember the century that slew him and forget its baseness in our admiration of the moral sublimity of his heroism. I could not think of committing the sacrilege of tendering pity to such an one as Bruno. Yes, I remember what a harassed life his was, followed and found by enemies wherever he went, exiled and outcast, with no spot that he could call home. I remember the treachery which at last put him into the fiery hand of the inquisition, and the eight years of languishing in the Roman dungeon without pen or book to occupy his restless, hungry mind; and the tortures of the rack. I remember his emaciated form as he was led to the stake, the flesh torn deep to the bone, his arms hanging useless at his side, pulled from their sockets by the tortures inflicted to make him recant. I remember it all. Nor is the late monument, erected amid the huzzas of an admiring world, any adequate compensation for what he suffered. Nor is it a compensation that Descartes and Kant and Hegel and Goethe have sat at his feet and called him master. He had other compensation, of a far higher order and of indestructible value. He needs no pity, for he conquered the world and appropriated all the good there is to be had in it as he went along. That fearless heroism in the search of truth was in itself the wealth of the Universe. It brought a nobility which filled his nature with purest felicity. A man can admire nothing higher in this world than the sentiment expressed in the words of the dying Plotinus: "I am striving to draw to me whatever the Universe contains that is most divine."

But there is only one Bruno, one Jesus, one Socrates. Each stands in his epoch and serves the emergency which has created him. We worship our saviors and thankfully enjoy the better world which their self-sacrifices have made; but we common folks who are not called to the kingdom, who have little to do or expect beyond earning our daily bread, surely we can have no part or lot in this high realm of the heroes.

Yes, we can, nay, more, we must. To no class, however distinguished, has ever been given the monopoly of heroism. They who have exhibited it most conspicuously have simply shown us common people the path which leads to the richest romances of our own lives. There is no heart to whom does not come, somehow, the almighty "I ought." That "I ought" holds the key to all the riches of life. We are skeptical, incorrigibly skeptical on this point; but destiny puts us under the trip-hammer and shatters our skepticism with heart-breaks, and we are convinced. You cannot get a sweet and wholesome life by shirking that "I ought," you cannot do it, you cannot possibly do it. I do not care what that "I ought" says to you, what it insists on your doing, what unpleasant thing, irksome thing, perilous thing, the instant you refuse it and take the path of present comfort, you lose your grip on the sole power that can make your life worth the living. A person with no heroism in his life is diseased with the worst moral maladies. In the competitions of society he mingles, rotten with jealousies and envies and a hard unscrupulousness, and emitting a loathsome moral stench. He is haughty and heartless and greedy so long as he has his way and is prospered; and when trouble strikes him and his prosperity is cut down, he is a whimpering, whining coward. There must be a strong force of the heroism, that is costly, if you will escape moral rot with its noisome effluvia and its death of all the pleasure of living. This is what that "I ought" means. If you sacredly respect its mandate you will help to widen the truth of the world a little, only a little; you will help to lift the moral tone of society a little, only a little; the chiefest and to you the invaluable thing which you will do, you will widen and lift yourself, you will get a nobility which will put a sweeter meaning into your life and the power to stand in the midst of events, immovable, serene and full of all that is most divine in the universe.

What I greatly deprecate and view with no little alarm in this time of material splendor, is the dearth of heroism and of the social conditions which compel men into it. The old battlefield of truth, where Huss, Savanarola, Bruno, Channing and Theodore Parker achieved their royal manhood, is deserted. Truth is no longer a matter to die for, nobody cares particularly what is truth, and whether you take this path or take that path you will be let indifferently alone, to make for yourself what pastime you may out of your pursuit. In society the flagrant wrongs and oppressions of other days, which called forth daring and brilliant heroism, are happily gone by, we hope forever. Yet it is ominous, this calm into which society has settled, the dull, low level of a vast sordidness, unbroken by the sublimities of moral heroism. The fierce days of the early anti-slavery agitation, with their mobs and brickbats and firebrands, were heavy with moral power; they gave to history Garrison, and Phillips, and Lovejoy, and Johnson, and the Grimeses, a race of men and women who, with all their faults, rank among the heroes who reveal what grandeur is in man when filled with the energy of the inspired "I ought."

The old crisis will not come back; but in the calm that spreads over society to-day, new crises, I doubt not, are brewing. I cannot think that God is going to let the world die just yet. Heroism will move along lonely and less bloody paths than in the stormy

times of yore, but its day is coming again. In place of the solitary, conspicuous hero will be the tramp of the legion of common folks who hear the nobler conviction speaking out of the silences of the eternal, and along our humble paths live out the heroism of faithfulness and sincerity. It must be so or the old world is struck with its last and fatal sickness. Liberty and truth are languishing in the slough of the universal sordidness. Superstition degrades human life. Folly degrades it. Cupidity and meanness degrade it. Men and women are in bondage. They know that they are, yet how strong are the fetters and of what grandeur of life they are robbed they but dimly see. Happily, their discontent is fermenting, and great, blind struggles for liberty and truth are breeding.

It may not be a loud voice that speaks to you in the name of the eternal "I ought." It will not be a voice summoning you to rally an army or to take your life in your hand and stand against the shock of some impending crisis. It will perhaps be no more than a still, small voice laying upon you the duty of a manly honesty, of asserting the liberty of your own soul, of stepping quietly into a path of truth in which you will be neither persecuted nor followed. What it says to you, what poor, humble drudgery of self-denial it imposes upon you, is of little consequence, an atom in the world struggle, no more. What is of supreme concern to realize is this, that it is the same voice that Bruno heard, and that it has the same living relation to your moral history that it had to his, and means through your sweeter liberty and clearer truth, to affect the moral history of mankind. If a grander manhood and a grander life are to come to the world, your heroism in your little, obscure world, means help to prepare the way.

Correspondence.

A WORD OF COUNSEL.

EDITOR UNITY:—May I offer a word to the Iowa pastor for whom sympathy is asked in your issue of the 1st? Let him be honest. As he is a "thorough Unitarian," he should say so. At present he is doubly false, false to the faith which was once sincerely his, and false to the Unitarianism which he has chosen. I do not see how it is possible for a man in such a position to retain moral integrity. It is a boast of Unitarianism that it means intellectual honesty.

What can he do? I do not know. But I remember that when Newman became convinced that all separation from the church of Rome was wrong, he gave up position, income and chance of preferment in the wealthiest national church and the wealthiest university in the world.

I can scarcely imagine anything more degrading and contemptible than what the pastor referred to is now doing.

I have had this bit of personal experience. I was offered a chance of education for the ministry in a church closely allied to the one which I sincerely prefer. But the church in connection with which this offer was made has a definite standard of belief, a part of which I rejected then as I reject now. So I refused the offer at the risk of never getting the desire of my heart, a college course. But for this action I have never been sorry. In time I found a chance to get what was so earnestly desired. I have since served as pastor in the church referred to, but stated frankly and honestly my dissent from a part of their creed. I would scorn to try to pervert a church from the faith in which it had been established. Perhaps that is because I lack "liberality."

I owe much, both mentally and spiritually, to certain Unitarians, but they are men who do not, by position or otherwise, disown their faith.

Let me add in closing, that one of the things which repelled me from Unitarianism was just such underhanded, dishonorable work as that described by

your Iowa correspondent. Here is a pastor who occupies a pulpit of one denomination, while he really believes, though without open avowal, the doctrines of another. When "H. T." is next called upon for "counsel," let him say to his friend: "Be honest."

JOHN N. DAVIDSON.

STOUGHTON, WISCONSIN.

DEAR UNITY:—As the writer of this happens to be the "critic," to whom "C. P. W.," in a recent number of UNITY devotes a column and a half, under the head of "An Unworthy Appeal," he begs space for a brief reply. The protest against any further discussion of differences, which time alone can settle, was not made from any partisan standpoint, or in the interest of any party. It applied equally to the policy of the other religious periodicals, published in the West, the editors of which, while men of unquestioned sincerity, seem to be singularly blind to the mischief they are causing by keeping the so-called "issue" so prominently before their readers. It was sent to UNITY in the belief that that periodical would be more likely to give it the consideration it deserved. The writer, while in some respects more conservative in his thought than most Unitarians, has recently come to think that the differences referred to are mainly verbal and do not touch those fundamental principles upon which we are all agreed. His appeal, therefore, was made in all seriousness in behalf of that unity of the spirit, underlying all diversities, which we all have, or at any rate, profess to have, so deeply at heart. As Unitarians, we claim to stand not merely for freedom of thought, but for unity. Indeed, unity has been from the beginning our watchword. But how are we to have this except "in the bond of peace?" And how are we to have peace unless we stop quarreling? No doubt, as "C. P. W." says, "discussion is an essential part of our work." But this is not an end, but only a means to an end,—the end being the building up of saintly lives; and history and experience do not show this to be, as a rule, the end of religious discussion, and especially among those who belong to the same household of faith and differ from each other so slightly as Unitarians do. Certainly the kind of discussion we have had of late, while it may possibly have led some of us to inquire whether we have any intellectual basis for our faith, has wounded that unity of the spirit which ought to be our first and great concern.

The writer does not know how it may be elsewhere; but he does know that in Central and Southern Illinois our practical work, by which he means the formation of new societies and the revival of old ones, which are about to die, has been greatly retarded by the continued discussion of the Western issue. A whole column of comments by laymen might be quoted to this effect.

And so the writer is forced to conclude that his plea for peace, under the circumstances, was both wise and worthy.

HENRY A. WESTALL.

BLOOMINGTON, ILL.

DEAR UNITY:—I wish to call your attention to the following words from the address of Dr. Bradford, at the installation of Dr. Abbott as pastor of Plymouth church, Brooklyn: "Among the great Americans of the first century of the Republic, the name of the late pastor of this church will stand in the highest rank. Daniel Webster will be remembered as the expounder of the Constitution; Abraham Lincoln bound the Union as he unbound the slave; Grant was the American William the Silent; but none among them did a nobler work for humanity and the nation than he who has helped so many to realize that 'God, Christ, the Spirit, are synonymous with love, fellowship, freedom.'"

Does the Western Conference stand for anything more radical than the above true, noble sentiment which I have taken the liberty to italicize.

C. F. BRADLEY.

The Study Table.

New Light from Old Eclipses, etc. By William M. Page. St. Louis: C. R. Borns Publishing Co.

This book is an honest and laborious attempt to correct the chronology and harmonize the narratives of the four gospels. The preface begins by saying: "It has long been a source of grief to many Christian hearts that neither the correct date of our Lord's birth, the length of his ministry, nor the day of his death, has for the last seventeen hundred years been known to his church." Mr. Page thinks he has removed the cause of this grief by determining these hitherto uncertain dates.

All Christians, therefore, who are anxious to have all the statements of the four gospels reconciled with each other, or believe it possible without a greater sacrifice of truth than a promotion of it, will be interested in this book. Incidentally it seems to us to establish what it was written to refute, viz.: that a man in our time may know much more certainly and accurately what took place 2,000 years ago, than all the great array of orthodox writers and authorities cited in the intervening centuries. And yet the author of this work seems singularly distrustful or ignorant of the scholarship done in this field in the last generation. He rarely cites any recent writer as having contributed anything on this subject.

The second part is a well combined narrative of the four gospels into one account, comprising more than half the book. Especially useful and convenient is the printing of all the sayings of Jesus in heavier type. The book is handsomely printed and contains 590 pages.

L.

Pawnee Hero Stories. Folk Tales. By Geo. Bird Grinnell. New York: Forest & Stream Pub. Co.

The author of Pawnee Folk Tales is said to be "one of the few very scholarly white men who can speak the Pawnee language." His book is one of interest to the old for its researches into the wild and curious lore of one of the most degraded Indian tribes, while its qualities of adventure and romance will make a strong appeal to the young.

The author's acquaintance with the people his book describes, began in 1870, since which time he has frequently visited and lived among them, sharing their sports and pursuits. He speaks of the strong impression made "by the high qualities of the Pawnee character," which led to the wish to perpetuate their memory in some printed record. The contents of the volume are divided, as the title explains, under the two heads of Hero Stories and Folk Tales, followed by several pages of notes, describing the habits, laws and customs of the tribe.

C. P. W.

The Little Wicket Gate to Life. By John Page Hopps. Williams and Norgate, London. Price, one shilling.

This little book of eighteen short chapters, tastefully bound in red-lettered buff cloth, gives, in friendly talks to young people, much sound advice and wise injunction. It is intended for home or Sunday-school use, not in the question and answer form of study, but to be read as an incentive to thoughtful religious living.

Most of the chapters, such as "Endurance," "Give Me Thy Heart," "Little by Little," "The Good Shepherd," etc., have a Bible text, and some are interspersed with cheerful verses.

There is a kindly and benignant spirit pervading its "Guiding Thoughts for Young People," while yet much of the severely orthodox tone remains in its Unitarianism.

E. T. L.

A PEDANT is merely a fool on whom an education has been thrown away.—*Nicholas Flood Davin.*

A WRITER in *The Universalist Record* says he knows of "no skepticism more subtle, or more malignant, than that of a lost faith in the self-preservative force of truth."

Notes from the Field.

The Chicago Unitarian Club held a very pleasant meeting at the residence of Mr. J. M. Wanzer, 917 West Monroe street, February 5. Mr. D. L. Shorey, the President, introduced the essayist of the evening, Rev. Virgil H. Brown, of Princeton, Ill., who held the close attention of the club while presenting the subject, "The Man-God." Special emphasis was given to the thought of God as a reality, to the revelation of God through Christ and humanity, and to the consciousness of God as a being of infinite love. On motion of Mrs. Woolley, the club authorized the treasurer to arrange for the publication of the essay in *UNITY*. It will probably appear next week. Miss Tupper opened the discussion by calling attention to the practical necessity of the use of definite language to express our thoughts of Deity, and of the impossibility of expressing the reality without these gropings after the real nature of God. While agreeing in the main with the ideas of the paper, she questioned the spiritual adequacy of the terms employed to express those ideas. Mrs. Woolley commended the positive, the constructive spirit, the intense Theistic idea pervading the paper. Mr. Effinger expressed himself in sympathy with Mr. Brown's thought, although he probably would not have expressed the thought in the same way. He understood the essayist to mean the same as the dying Bunson did, when, looking into his wife's face, he said: "In thee I have seen the Eternal One." He thanked Mr. Brown for attempting to bring the idea of God down from the clouds into the light of day. Mr. Marshall quoted Micah's comprehensive injunction to deal justly, love mercy and walk humbly before the Lord, which forbade all arrogant assumption of exclusive knowledge of the Deity. Recognizing the universal law of labor, he showed that as material values can be gained only by effort, so spiritual attainments and knowledge can be secured only by striving. During the discussion, gratitude was expressed for the efforts made by the noble souls of the past to ascertain the character and qualities of Deity, and that while these recorded efforts should not be considered as lines bounding God's nature, they were very helpful as tentative descriptions of that nature; and that, although we would not worship humanity any more than we would worship the stars or the sky; we would worship the Infinite Power manifested in star and sky and man. Mr. Brown explained that it should never be thought necessary to know God in order to believe that He is. His being is realizable, but not believable. He simply is and what we know of Him, and all we know of Him is what we realize of the life we are. The highest human life is ever to us the completest revelation of God. The power of man over his own humanity is more universal and greater than that of the God of our historic creeds. His goodness, beauty, greatness—His incomprehensible and mysterious being compose the unwritten code of laws that govern humanity. At the sacred altar of the human life devotion is real and blessing is sure. Mrs. Woolley moved that a committee, consisting of Mr. Shorey, Mrs. Wilkinson and Mrs. West, be appointed to make arrangements, if practicable, for holding the meetings of the club in some central location. The motion was approved, with the amendment that Mrs. Woolley be added to the committee. It was announced that Miss Mila F. Tupper, of LaPorte, Ind., would give the address at the next meeting in March. Her subject will be "Ingersoll's Agnosticism vs. Modern Theism." The formal programme was followed by the serving of refreshments and the usual social enjoyments. Mrs. E. A. West, Secretary.

Boston.—Rev. M. J. Savage, at a late club meeting, said he had come to notice these classes of Unitarians, 1st, all the year round Unitarians; 2d, those semi-detached; 3d, those who never go to any other church; 4th, the very numerous class of *post mortem* Unitarians. —Rev. Henry F. Bond and his wife, the Montana Indian missionaries, were the centre of a very cordial reception party on Friday evening, at the church of Rev. Charles G. Ames. They also had a reception in the parlor of Dr. Hale's church on Wednesday evening. —At the meeting of the Channing Club the Episcopalian and Unitarian guests joined in recommending Christian care of the bright street boys of our city.

—On Sunday evening Rev. Phillips Brooks preached at the Grand Opera House upon "The glorious possibilities of saving one's self while working to save others." There was a half hour concert before the service by the Navy Yard Band, with singing by Harvard students.

—The Pundita Ramabai now shelters in her India home, after nine months of service, thirteen child-widows, and thirteen others are day scholars. Some of the pupils pay tuition fees. She finds caste opposition to her charity slowly weakening. The Ramabai Building Fund now adds up \$18,000.

La Porte, Ind.—The Unitarian Church of La Porte issues a leaflet headed, "Freedom, Fellowship and Character in Religion," announcing the schedule of services for February. Three services are held each Sunday, including the Sunday-school. The New Testament Record of Jesus furnishes the topics for Sunday evening talks. Meetings for different branches of work are announced for Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays. One section of Unity Club is studying Shakespeare.

The Emerson Class is at work on Representative Men. The young people of the church are brought together in a Lend-a-hand Section. A Dickens' Sociable will be held at the church, "probably" on the evening of February 14. A local paper reports a recent Sunday evening talk by the minister, Mila Frances Tupper, on the "Revision of the Westminster Confession of Faith" and the recent meetings of the New York Presbytery, in the course of which she says:

The present revelations to the experience and thought of man may not be denied with impunity upon the verdict of any arbitrary authority. The great danger of our time and the chief stumbling block to religious influence is Bibliolatry, that superstitious reverence for a book which causes us to question the Holy Spirit until its messages are confirmed by the theology of Paul or the theory of Moses.

The confession seems crude to us, and yet it is the able attempt of conscientious men to interpret revelation and God's providence. It seems to give little encouragement to love and trust, and yet it was in this faith that our Puritan forefathers lived and suffered. If they could be loyal to such a faith, how great is our responsibility who have the new freedom and light of the Spirit of Truth.

Fall River, Mass.—Rev. A. J. Rich, of the Unitarian Church, has entered upon his seventh year of successful pastorate. The Society has constantly increased in members and financial strength, and the Sunday-school has trebled in numbers, the pastor's Bible Class averaging from 30 to 40. Entering upon his work with an empty treasury and a small debt, there is to-day no debt, but several thousands of dollars in the treasury, part of which is by legacy. Both church and minister are progressive in theology. It is through this church that a flourishing city Flower Mission has been started, out of which has been born an Associated Charities, which has become a strong force in the management of the Poor question. Nearly all the churches of the city are associated in the work, including influential priests and clergymen of the Catholic church. Mr. Rich is corresponding secretary, and a member of his Bible class is the agent. And in the wake of these philanthropic moments a Y. M. C. Association has arisen, from which Unitarians, as usual, are shut out, notwithstanding the enterprise was first broached by leading Unitarians. There is needed a Unitarian city missionary here.

Rochester, N. Y.—We have received and read with interest the Calendar of the Unitarian Church for the month of February. We copy a suggestive paragraph that may be of interest to other churches: "The envelope system of collecting the church revenue goes into operation February 1. It is hoped that every man woman and child will cooperate to make it a success. Children who begin by giving their three or five cents in the weekly envelope, are likely to grow up to be interested in the church and helpers in its work." —The Church Parlor is open twice a week, from 7 to 9:30 P. M., for the "Boy's Evening Home." This Home, only a month old, has already a membership of sixty boys, many of them newboys. Each of them "paying ten cents a month for the use of the rooms and games and papers, and the cup of chocolate and cookie twice a week."

Concord, Mass.—F. B. Sanborn, of Concord, General Secretary of the American Social Science Association, sailed for Europe Feb. 5. His address will be Baring Brothers, London. He desires us to announce that subscriptions to a marble bust of A. Bronson Alcott, to be made by D. C. French, of 125 West Eleventh street, New York, will be received by S. H. Emery, Jr., Quincy, Ill., F. B. Sanborn, Concord, Mass., and Mrs. E. D. Cheney, New England Woman's Club, Boston. The subscription thus far is:

Trustees of the Concord School of Philosophy	\$200
W. T. Harris, Washington	25
F. B. Sanborn, Concord	25
Ednah D. Cheney, Boston	25
R. N. Rice, Concord	20

Manistee, Mich.—The ladies of the Unitarian Society have organized a Helping Hand, Division of the King's Daughters. For the benefit of the poor children of the city who are unable to make their own dresses, a sewing school was opened in the Ladies' Rooms of the Unitarian Church building on Saturday, Jan. 25. There were thirty-two girls in the school at the opening. There is also in this church a "Young Folks Unity," which meets every two weeks. It includes those from ten to fifteen years of age. There are eighteen members and they are studying Miss Wright's Stories of the Great Scientists.

Alton, Ill.—We have just received the programme of Unity Club of Alton, for 1889-90. Mr. Denny Roper, president, and Mr. Harry Phillips, secretary. The club is divided into two sections, Literary and Scientific, which hold alternate sessions. The topics yet to be treated, and the dates of meetings, are as follows: Feb. 19, Engineering; March 5, Cooper; March 19, Electricity; April 2, Lowell; April 16, Botany; April 30, Holmes; May 14, Concert.

Minneapolis, Minn.—The Scandinavian papers of Minneapolis announce a series of liberal religious discourses in the Swedish language, commencing Sunday, Feb. 16, by Axel Lundeborg. Mr. Lundeborg came to this country about two years ago as correspondent of several Swedish newspapers. He is spoken of as

a man of scholarly attainments and closely identified with the Unitarian movement in his own country. He has spent some months at Lombard University, Galesburg, Ill., and desires now to organize a Swedish Unitarian Society in Minneapolis.

Rock Valley, Ia.—A correspondent writes: We have organized our study circle, calling it "The Milton Study Circle." Last Friday evening we spent two hours very profitably in an informal discussion of the question, "How much of character is made up by outside influences?" At our next meeting we take up the question, "What unsettled theological questions demand our attention to-day as citizens?"

Des Moines, Iowa.—Our young friend, Blanche Maxwell, writes Feb. 3: Last Sunday the Unitarian Congregation here was offered the long looked for opportunity of welcoming back to their pulpit Miss Ida C. Hultin, who has been ill for some time, but is now well, though not so strong as she hopes to be. Services will be held every Sunday hereafter.

Haverhill, Mass.—A correspondent writes from Haverhill, Jan. 5, ordering tracts and inclosing the money to pay for them, but unfortunately omitting the name of the writer. The Secretary of the Publishing Committee hopes hereby to catch the eye of her correspondent and explain delay. She will fill order as soon as the name is forthcoming.

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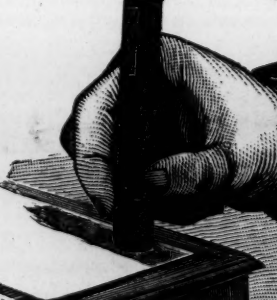
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The Home.

A SPARROW'S SONG.

I am only a little sparrow,
I build my nest on the ground,
I cannot soar as the lark does,
In infinite ether drowned.
But down in the dewy grasses,
I make my quiet bed;
And look at the great clouds floating,
So far o'er a sparrow's head.

I see the grand trees waving;
In the wind I cannot see,
The friendly stars outshining,
And the human lights round me;
Then the mighty tempest cometh,
In wreck o'er the night serene,
And how can a sparrow but wonder,
What its own little life may mean?

The sphere of a dew-drop mirrors,
The vast sky-dome unrolled,
And the soul of the tiniest sparrow,
The all of a life can hold,
The summer's beauty and wonder,
The joy of the lark's rare strain,
Make its day's delight in living,
Though it try to sing them in vain.

ALICE GORDON.

EDISON'S ORIGINAL IDEAS.

Several incidents, some of which are very amusing, are related of Thomas Edison's boyhood, which show that the inventive genius must have been at work upon him in his younger days, and which help to prove that great inventors, like great poets, are "born, not made."

When quite young he was forced to earn his living as a newsboy upon one of our western railway lines. He often had a rather hard time of it to dispose of his papers, and sometimes after having worked hard and steadily, he ended his day's work with a large number still left on his hands.

But one day a happy thought occurred to him. Why could he not telegraph short summaries of the most important and interesting news ahead to the next station, and have bulletin boards posted in conspicuous places near the depot, announcing the latest sensations? The idea was a novel one, and he at once resolved to put it into execution, which he did with results as he had expected. When the train arrived at the station it was sure to be surrounded by an eager and gaping crowd of people, all of them anxious to hear the full particulars of the news which he had briefly outlined in his reports.

Later on he was inspired by a desire to publish a paper of his own. So he went to work with a will to get the necessary type and other needed things, and started a small paper, which was actually printed upon the train on which he was employed, though in a very rude way; the impression being taken without the use of a press, by the simple and novel method of rubbing the paper which was spread over the face of the type with the hand.

Soon after this he began to experiment with chemicals, having set up a small laboratory of his own in the same car which had served as a printing office; and it was at this time that his true calling began to be made manifest. But alas for his hopes. One day when he was experimenting he was careless enough to set the car on fire, and although it did but little more damage than to frighten the passengers somewhat, the railway company concluded that they could get along without his services. Accordingly the young chemist, with his bottles and jugs, was summarily discharged from the train; but, nothing daunted, it was only a short time before he obtained a better place, from which advancement was easy, and to-day we are glad of the privilege to acknowledge him as one of the greatest inventors the world has ever known.

V. M. D.

THE KING'S DAUGHTERS.

Last summer, while away on our vacation in the southern part of New York State, our sympathies were aroused by the hardships and privations of the minister of the little Methodist chapel in our region, who had the charge of two other parishes besides the one in which we were located. On Sundays, by starting very early in the

morning and driving, in all about forty miles, he managed to preach once to each of his three charges. The people in the vicinity are all farmers, the season is short, (the place being in the Shawangung mountains,) and cash is very scanty. When we arrived, although the pastor had had charge for nine months, the only money he had received was six dollars from this one parish, and very little from the others. We, all being Episcopalians, felt at first a little diffident about going forward in any efforts in his behalf, but at last decided the work was ours. So we set to work and made candy and prepared for a garden party. We had a delightful day, although the night before the river was much swollen, the bridge on the principal road was washed away, which kept many, who were coming to help us, away. But we cleared seventy-five dollars, which we had the pleasure of handing to the gentleman the next day. And we were more than repaid by the gratitude expressed in his countenance. —*The Silver Cross.*

The Newest Books.

All books sent to UNITY for review will be promptly acknowledged under this heading, and all that seem to be of special interest to the readers of UNITY will receive further notice. Any book in print will be mailed on receipt of price, by the publishers of UNITY CHARLES H. KERR & CO., 175 Dearborn st., Chicago.

Social Ideals. Ethics for the Young. Two pamphlet addresses. By W. L. Sheldon. St. Louis: W. B. Lange, publisher, 621 Chestnut st. Paper, 18mo., price 10 cents each.

The Unending Genesis; or, Creation Ever Present. By H. M. Simmons. Chicago: Charles H. Kerr & Co. Paper, 18mo., pp. 111. 25 cents.

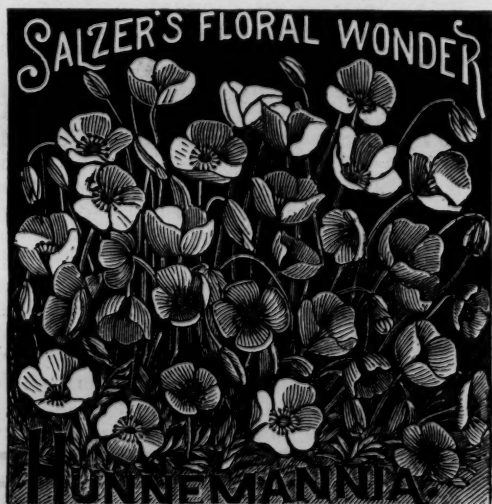
The New Arithmetic. Edited by Seymour Eaton with a preface by Truman Henry Safford. Boston: D. C. Heath & Co. Cloth, 12mo., pp. 230. 85 cents.

Jeanne D'Arc. By A. De Larmatine. Edited with notes and a vocabulary by Albert Banese. Boston: D. C. Heath & Co. Paper, 12mo., pp. 183.

La Metromanie: comedie, en cinq actes, par Alexis Piron. With an introduction and notes by Leon Delbos, M. A. Boston: D. C. Heath & Co. Paper, 12mo., pp. 175.

State and Federal Governments of the United States. By Woodrow Wilson, Ph. D., LL. D. Boston: D. C. Heath & Co. Cloth, 12mo., pp. 131. 56 cents.

Ruby Dana. A novel. By Mary Marsh Baker. New York: John B. Alden. Cloth, 12mo., pp. 287.



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The following course of lectures, for the benefit of the Western Conference, is to be given in the Third Unitarian Church, corner Monroe and Laflin sts:

February 19th, 1890, Turgot, D. L. Shorey; February 27th, The Ideal Side of the French Revolution, W. M. Salter; March 6th, Shakspeare's Sonnets, Rev. Augusta Chapin; March 13th, How Plants Defend Themselves—illustrated, Prof. E. L. Bastin; March 19th, What Shall our Public Schools Aim to Accomplish, Mrs. Ella F. Young. Price for course \$1.00; single admission, 25c.

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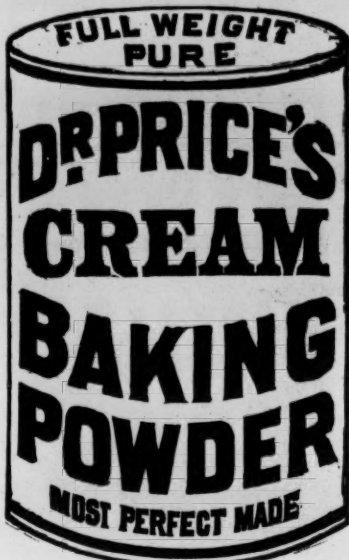
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